

Quarantine Papers

- Copy -

Circular.

Is. D. 5, 10th 1893

1062

Department of State,

Washington, May 10, 1893.

To the Consular Officers
of the United States at Seaports.

The duplicate bill of health must be taken by all vessels departing from a foreign port for a port of the United States; and the preliminary inspection prescribed in the Treasury regulations contained in the same pamphlet is required for all vessels, however laden, departing from an infected port and for all vessels carrying passengers from European, Asiatic, African, South American, Central American, Mexican, and West Indian ports for the United States. Vessels leaving noninfected ports and not carrying passengers are not required to be inspected in the prescribed manner, but the consul or medical officer issuing the bill of health must be satisfied that the matters and things therein stated are true.

5 a

When the vessel is disinfected before the bill of health is given, a certificate, in the form prescribed on page 10 of the regulations, should be attached thereto. This certificate should be signed by the consul or by the medical officer, according as the one or the other supervised the disinfection. When there is no consular officer at or near the port of departure, the vessel should obtain a bill of health from the local health authorities.

6 a

with the rules and regulations in such cases prescribed for securing the best sanitary condition of the said vessel, its cargo, passengers and crew; and said consular or medical officer is required, before granting such duplicate bill of health, to be satisfied that the matters and things therein stated are true; and for his services in that behalf he shall be entitled to demand and receive such fees as shall by lawful regulation be allowed, to be accounted for as is required in other cases.

The President in his discretion, is authorized to detail any medical officer of the Government to serve in the office of the consul at any foreign port for the purpose of furnishing information and making the inspection and giving the bills of health hereinbefore mentioned.

Gentlemen:

The Department sent to each of you on March 14 last a copy of the "United States Quarantine Laws and Regulations," compiled and issued in pamphlet form by the Treasury Department under date of February 24, 1893; on April 28 a supplementary pamphlet, entitled "Laws and Regulations for the Maritime Quarantines of the United States," and issued by the Treasury Department under date of April 4, 1893, was sent to you.

2a

Both these documents contain the full text of the National Quarantine Act approved February 15, 1893, which imposes important duties upon consular officers, and to certain portions of which I desire to direct your special attention:

Section 2 provides---

That any vessel at any foreign port clearing for any port or place in the United States shall be required to obtain from the consul, vice-consul, or other consular officer of the United States at the port of departure, or from the medical officer where such officer has been detailed by the President for that purpose, a bill of health, in duplicate, in the form prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury, setting forth the sanitary history and condition of said vessel, and that it has in all respects complied

3a

The bill of health is issued at the port of departure for the United States. When the vessel stops at an intermediate foreign port, the bill of health taken at the port of departure must be visaed by the consular or medical officer at such intermediate port. A special form of visa, approved by the Treasury Department, will be sent to you for this use. The vessel and the passengers on board at the time of arrival at the intermediate port are not to be inspected again; but after ascertainment of any change that may have taken place in the sanitary condition of the vessel or passengers, the visa should be attached to the bill of health, and should set forth the changed conditions, if any, on board, the sanitary condition of the port visited, and the compliance of the vessel, as regards the passengers, effects, and cargo taken on there, with the rules and regulations made under the Act of February 15, 1893.

Where the vessel does not enter the port of call, but merely takes on passengers, mails, etc., from a lighter or tender, the consular inspection at that port need cover only the passengers, baggage, mails, etc., taken on there and the sanitary condition of the port. The form of visa above prescribed may be used in such cases, leaving blank the part which refers to the condition of the vessel and the passengers on board, and stating instead that the vessel did not visit the port.

The fee for certifying the duplicate bills of health, with or without the certificate of disinfection, is \$2.50, and the fee for the visa is 50 cents, as prescribed in the tariff of official fees (Consular Regulations, paragraph 508, fees Nos. 19 and 94).

These fees are official and in full for the services. The statutes prohibit expenditures out of official fees collected by consuls, except in pursuance of an appropriation; and it is not lawful for consuls to collect extra fees for their services in carrying out the quarantine laws and regulations with intent to use the same in defraying the expense incident to the performance of those services.

The prescribed fees are not in proportion to the labor involved in the services, and they are not regarded as compensation therefor, but only for the formal authentication of the instruments. The labor and service of the consul and medical officer required by the act and regulations are not for the advantage of the vessels, but for the safety and welfare of the people of the United States, and the President has not been disposed to impose upon the vessels any increased charges for the services of Government employees in carrying out the existing sanitary laws. For the same reasons and for the additional and controlling one that the law forbids (R. S., sec. 1723), consuls are not permitted to make any private charge for official services in connection with this work.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed.)

JOSIAH QUINCY,

Assistant Secretary.